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TUESDAY, JULY 6.

DESULTORIA.

George Meredith is a man of genius. His best novels are indeed well worth reading, both for their wit and thought. The best are not without real interest as stories. His fault as a writer is obscurity; the style at times being careless, involved, mechanical, rugged. But there are other passages remarkably neat, artistic even, and flooded with intelligence. Many years ago he wrote "An Essay on Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit." It is but recently reprinted. It was delivered as a lecture in 1877. In this he is at his best as to style. It is all aglow with inspiration and its wit is bright and subtle. In contrasting the wit of the two famous French comedy writers—Moliere and Moliere—he brings out in his fine way this happy, clear-cut contrast—that the wit of Moliere is a Toledo blade, sharp and wonderfully supple for steel; cast for dueling, restless in the scabbard, being so pretty when out of it. Moliere's wit is like a running brook, with innumerable fresh lights on it at every turn of the wood through which its business is to find a way. It does not run in search of obstructions to be noisy over them; but when dead leaves and other substances are heaped along the course its natural song is heightened. Without effort, and with no dazzling flashes of achievement, it is full of healing, the wit of good breeding, the wit of wisdom.

We have no doubt that of living novelists who use English as their medium Meredith is the greatest, unless Hardy be his equal or superior. The first novel we ever read of these very able authors we liked best of all we have read of them, but have not read half that each has produced. "Far from the Madding Crowd," by Hardy, was quite delightful to us, so full of absolute freshness and vigor, so strong and masculine in portraiture, so clear and admirable in an almost pure English style, and free from the taint and nastiness of his late works. "Richard Feverel," by Meredith, is a work of splendid genius. It is one of the very best half dozen novels of the last quarter of a century. It is not as absolutely clean as we would like it to be, but it is full of intellectual virility, fecundity and interest.

The very able critic of the New York Sun is well worth reading. His judgments are usually sound and his discussions ordinarily are conducted with marked power. We are no great admirer of Anthony Hawkins. We have read just enough of his writings to gather something, at least, of his mental stride and scope, to know something of his art, to note his style, his mannerism, his mastery of plot. He tells a story vividly, vigorously, interestingly. The style itself does not particularly impress us, but he knows how to construct a very engaging plot with many intricacies (reminiscent of one of Whisk Collins) and makes incident the chief source of interest. He is not a thick-skinned and novelist like Thackeray and Meredith, nor a great story teller like Scott, whom he imitates, Dumas and Dickens. But he is clever full of surprises, and keeps you under a constant puzzle. The Sun's critic says he "has a style admirably adapted to his purpose—it is crisp, lucid, fluent, forceful." He says of his latest book, "Phroso," "deemed a decided success by the critics generally."

"With regard to 'Phroso,' the book before us, we are not how sated and it up, he would finish it at a sitting and count a night's rest well lost. The author plays with our curiosity as we play with a hooked trout; there is something bewildering in the multiplicity of incident, something almost labyrinthine in the concatenation of the plot."

He says again: "Viewed merely as an example of intricate yet methodical construction, 'Phroso' deserves high commendation, while, as regards invention, it contains materials enough for a dozen novels cynical a man may have become, we defy him to lay it down if he once takes of the ordinary type."

It is the very novel to capture the great mass of novel readers. It is not great, but entertaining. If you would read great novels, turn to Scott's Scotch novels, to Thackeray, to George Eliot, to Dickens, to Victor Hugo, to Eugene Sue and some others.

After writing the above, we added this, after an interval of a week or two: It seems to be accepted that Anthony Hawkins' "Phroso" is a very successful romance of the exciting, intensely rioting kind. It is overflowing, as all of his books are said to be, with many accidents by flood and field, is a continued strain of adventure, with but little thought and much vivid description. We have been interested in those of his writings we have read, but those

chief characteristic is excitement—there being, doubtless, a certain attractiveness, but no little of the unreal, the unnatural about them. His novels leave a very different impression with the reader than is left by such a profound master of romance as the great Sir Walter. Read that splendid masterpiece, "The Antiquary," and then try one of Hawkins' (Hope's, as he writes himself), and you feel at once the contrast. The artificial, nervous, excited strain of the latter is painfully apparent in contrast with the healthfulness, naturalness, masterly character drawing, soundness of tone, insight and wisdom of the illustrious story teller of Scotland. As one critic said of Hope, he is one-tenth nature and nine-tenths fantasy. He is brilliant, doubtless, and fertile and dashing, but there are audacity and varnish and whimsicality and romantic imaginings without stint. There are several writers of the Hope school, the latest being Mr. Charles Roberts. He is inferior to Hawkins in some particulars, we infer—in cunning art of construction, in melodramatic situations and striking denouements, but he has force, dramatic quality that amounts to something, and a deeper sense of reality than the other. There is less of glamour and more of nature. His last novel, "The Forge in the Forest," is an interesting historical novel, if the judgment of many critics can be trusted. But there is a painful falling away of the best of the latter-day romantic writers from the masters—those marvellous creators and story tellers, who gave you something more than incidents, adventures and improbable stories.

When the illustrious Gladstone, now past his 87th year, shall have completed his course, what a vast flood of essays and biographies will follow. It is stated that at least 100 biographies have been written upon him and are awaiting his demise for publication. The practice of The London Times for a half century has been to have carefully prepared by the best available writers elaborate biographies of England's great men. It has been stated that critical biographies have been published from time to time of leading authors and statesmen, the writers of which had been dead for years. Gladstone is the greatest figure in England's political history in this century. He was in public life more than sixty years, and three times premier, and yet his literary writings are equal to those in quantity of professed literary authors. He is not only great, but pure and versatile. He has done more for the lower classes in Great Britain than any man who ever lived in the marvellously productive island.

RELIGIOUS EDITORIALS FOR SUNDAY.

"Repent ye, for the Kingdom of God is at hand." This is the first step in religious life. No man ever became truly pious and had the Christ in the soul the hope of glory, unless before God and unto God he had made sincere, honest, earnest confession of sins—unless he had felt the need of a Saviour and had realized his lost condition—unless he had really, genuinely, deeply repented of his sins against God—unless in a true Scriptural sense he had repented. First repentance toward God, and then faith in the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Redeemer. Christ never comes to a soul and dwells there until the requisite preparation has been made. Repentance is that preparation. God is angry with the sinner until he repents. It must be a genuine work, a Godly repentance. Then when you have found Christ as your Saviour, rolling upon Him your sins, for "He careth for you," and "believing unto salvation" you will begin to show it forth in a consistent religious life, in holy living, for the eternal Scriptures of inspiration say—"Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." That is, to show the genuineness of the work done in you, your repentance, by doing. If faith without works is dead, as the Bible declares, so repentance without works—that is without active service and holy living—is futile and false and dead also. "Repent and turn yourselves from all your transgressions." This is your work to do. God will not, cannot repent for you. "Cast away from you all your transgressions." "Wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." "Repent ye therefore, and be converted." Repentance is man's work, pardon and salvation are God's work.

We do not accept unreservedly the opinions and teachings of Dean Farrar. He is a very popular, interesting and fascinating writer. We have read with very great pleasure and we hope profit several works from his fruitful and gifted pen. He is scholarly, and even eloquent. Some years ago—about 1890—he discussed in some English magazines the subject of fasting. The fathers in the church in the last century and in this, favored, urged, even required fasting. We confess that in fasting we have made but little headway. Owing to atonic dyspepsia and nervous temperament we have been made sick when we fasted for any purpose. We had headache, nervousness increased, general lowering of our physical comfort and strength and we could not see that our spiritual enjoyment and strength were increased. Others have found great benefit from fasting accompanied with meditation and prayer. Dr. Farrar is not favorable to fasting, and in the English Magazine and the Expositor, some where about 1890, he took the ground that in the New Testament there is no author-

ity for it. About that time, or a little later, the New York Independent, not high authority with us in matters pertaining to religion, although a remarkably large and able weekly publication, said that "the ripest Biblical scholarship is in accord with Archdeacon Farrar in this matter." What we would like to be informed about is what the most pious, sound, thoroughly competent expositors and divines say as to the real teachings of the New Testament as to fastings, and the duty of Christian believers in the matter—the strong as well as the weak. If it is really the duty of all to fast—if it is positively incumbent upon all Christians in all conditions of mind and body to fast—that it is a genuine test of obedience for all persons—then the duty is plain, headache or no headache, nervous prostration or otherwise. You must fast if you have to go to bed to do it. Thus far we some how feel much inclined to wish that the more recent Biblical scholars, expositors and critics are right rather than the old interpreters. "The spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

We are encouraged by good people and educated people and reading people in our Sunday discussion under a religious heading. We have received first and last a considerable number of endorsements in letters, messages and oral statements. Some are from very pious women, some from cultured women who are religious, some from good and true laymen who love God and serve him, and some from ministers of the Gospel and not all of one denomination. "An elect lady" in Wilmington—a very admirable Christian, said some years ago now, that she got better preaching to her often from our Sunday religious editorial columns than she did from her minister. A well known preacher of the glorious Gospel of the Son of God wrote to us some few years since:

"God grant you a long lease of life to do His will. Your influence for Christ is beyond estimate through the 'Religious Reading for Sunday' that you send forth in the Sunday Messenger. There are lonely hearts to cherish all over our sunny land, and when our Lord gathers up His jewels many may be placed in your crown of rejoicing brought up from heathen and homes cherished and comforted by your words. May your path shine brighter until the perfect day of our rest amid the amaranthine bowers of Heaven."

Owing to sickness and work we saw but little of the late great Baptist gathering in this city. We saw a few of its ministers and were gladdened by a few calls from laymen. We were delighted to shake hands again with our old dear friend Rev. Dr. James B. Taylor, a Christian indeed, a man of God, a sweet spirited disciple of the Master. He came two or three times. The last visit brought from him an expression of approval of our work on the Messenger in the religious column. He said: "Brother you are doing more good than many ministers and God will bless you in your labors." We write generally with much necessary hurry. It is not "beaten off" such as we could give if we had leisure necessary for such careful work. But we aim to do good, to tell the truth, to induce others to reflect. We look to the Giver of every good and perfect gift for His blessing upon what is written. It is religious truth given out in a secular paper. Unless the Holy Spirit shall accompany the written word there will be no harvest—the seed sown will fall on barren soil and no fruit shall be seen. "But the natural man receiveth not the things of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them for they are spiritually discerned." Mark that.

Here is a wise, wholesome bit of reflection from a scholarly southern Christian editor. It expresses a truth and imparts a lesson. Dr. Hoss says in the Nashville Christian Advocate:

"In fact, we have never been acquainted with any man who did not seem to us to have shortcomings of some kind. Christians should, therefore, pray, first for the illumination of the Spirit, enabling them to see their defects, and, secondly, for the overcoming grace that is necessary in order to the attainment of a perfect character."

Four-Year-Old's Resolve

He was just a little past four years old, and had been religiously trained by his parents to believe in the efficacy of prayer. They would be answered in time, he was told, if the petitioner were truly sincere and possessed faith, says the Chicago "Journal."

But on one occasion Divine Providence don't move quick enough to suit him.

His one ambition was to have a toy steam engine. He had thought of it by day dreamed of it by night, but he saw no way out of the difficulty. At last he remembered his mother's admonitions and decided to resort to prayer.

The first day he was hopeful, but his engine failed to arrive. Next day he prayed again, and when bed time came he was still without his cherished toy. His faith began to weaken. The close of day brought no engine, and when he prayed that night he resolved to take a decided stand.

"O Lord," he said, "I'll pray just one day more, and if it isn't here then I'll worship idols."

Do not judge from mere appearances; for the light laughter that bubbles on the lip often mingles over the depths of sadness, and the serious look may be the sober veil that covers a divine peace and joy. The bosom can ache beneath diamond brooches; and many a blithe heart dances under a coarse wool.—E. H. Chapin.

Public Schools.

Wilmington, N. C., July 2. Further examination of the important recommendations of the board of education leads us to thirdly: Wherein is the declaration that "no school term in the county of New Hanover shall be less than six months instead of three or four as has been the custom for years past." For two years past the length of the school term in the county has been four months, but previous to that time in all the districts where the people appreciated school advantages and kept up the tendency to a fair average, the term was made five months for several years; some of the schools for four months only, because of the slim attendance. There were, many years ago, a much shorter term, in very poor uncomfortable school houses, with uneducated and ignorant teachers. There were exceptions of course.

Many very amusing accounts of the schools have been given by some of the boys of those primitive days, as to the kind of discipline: boys were often sent to measures to be beaten in the school yard, and it was no uncommon thing for the teacher to cross his legs over the desk, and read, six or eight weeks, term was as long as any one wanted the schools. Since those days there has been a gradual growth to a better condition of affairs; and the majority of the children is the result of educating the people to a better standard by a few faithful men and women deeply interested in their work. We would very much like to know how they propose having it done. This is a duty that is seldom done as thoroughly as it should be, and anyone starting out to perform it, should be fully posted, efficient, wise, there will be omissions and the school districts will not have credit for their full numbers. The writer once saw the census of his district, just handed in to the taker, of the omission to enter nine children, parts of whose families were on his list, showing that he had failed to make all the inquiries necessary to get out the full and correct number of children of school age in those families. The census is important in making statistics and if not correct fails in its purpose. Now, is it reasonable to suppose that a man who is qualified to do through every hole and corner of the township, enter the abodes of every peasant, and enter the census of every household, and apply himself to this work without compensation? Do you know that some people are so suspicious when a man enters the house that it requires an hour or more to disabuse the minds of the occupants of any evil intentions? This work is attended also with other duties required of the committees and the supervisor. They have always been paid for this service, and have to still have it to do or disperse with this information.

Vouchers for teacher's pay have now to be signed by at least two of the committee in approval; when it required two and the school districts much smaller than they will be, and other duties presented themselves, many of these good people who never entered a school room, set themselves up as judges, dictating and interfering with the work, what should be, and how taught and measured the capacity of the teachers by the number of hours the children were kept in the school houses; the same ideas prevail now, but in a less degree because, as we contend, the people are gradually becoming more intelligent, and the schools are these hindrances so marked and embarrassing as in the public schools, because everybody owns stock in them. Why the enactment of laws to increase in our country schools, hence how important it is that the board of education should give them the proper supervision, appointing a supervisor who could give his time to them untrammelled by other school duties and the selection of committees.

When the work of lengthening the school terms was undertaken in the country schools it was found difficult to carry out. Many remained away of their own accord and some put to work at their homes, and it seemed to be a hopeless task, and some progress was made. The effort to extend the school term to six months in the country is consequently not yet a five months with a promise of six months in those districts where the people will show their appreciation by keeping the children up to their work, will be the most economical disposition of the school funds if experience is an aid, and the work will be required to carry out the school terms.

Fourthly: "The board desires to appoint such men only, as school committees of the county districts will select, who are furnished to the schools without charge by the committees of the districts." This is another slap at the teachers, and leaves the door wide open for injustice; charges of extravagance have been made against these schools in the past. We do not know what the cost of supplying wood for the past two years has been, but previous to that time the wood was cut from the stump, hauled to the school house, split and split to suit the stoves and piled away in the wood houses for use at a cost of \$1 per cord. This price was not unreasonable when it was often hauled from one to one and a half miles. We know how it used to be when the people were compelled to pay for fuel to the country schools free of cost to the county any more than the city people should be required to send wood to the city schools free of cost. The people in the country can no more afford to do this thing than the city people can, and why should any individual be required to put his hands in his pockets and hand out \$10 or \$12 to pay for the wood consumed in the country schools? It is wrong and unjust to make it a condition of comfort to our children. It always has been a hard matter to get a piece of wood for the schools in some districts even by paying for it. We think the board of education will be greatly disappointed in some of the projects they are finding them impracticable. Did they ever ask themselves what are the inducements to become a committee member? They are often blamed and abused when doing their best, particularly those who are the hardest and most active workers for the schools. They are called to account by their neighbors and set at variance with their best friends, because of some trivial school affair that ought never to have disturbed their pleasant relations. We would advise the honorable board to get the experience of the working men on the committee, not those who have never done anything that is done and never do anything themselves, but of the steady intelligent worker in the district; it would be time profitably spent.

We notice that this honorable board has many other duties for the committees, apart from their connection with them, and what the law requires of them, that of making certain reports to the county commissioners. Who are the county commissioners? Our people have sense enough to know that they are one and the same as the board of education under another name. What a farce to parade these assumed duties before the public.

The board of education is not by law required to make any reports to the county commissioners that we know of, and what does it amount to if they were, so long as one set of men on one board pass upon their action on another board. Men of refinement and intelligence usually decline positions which place them in this attitude.

Statements of expenses have heretofore been itemized and audited monthly by the old board of education, and why should these officials require any more? They have been before the county commissioners, but they have not been before the public.

Any intelligent men or women who will examine and acquaint themselves with the necessity of keeping the management of the school funds and school affairs separate and distinct from other county matters, such as the county commissioners' management, will be convinced that the two boards should be separate and managed by different men. This conclusion was arrived at by the writer several years ago and he has had no reason to change his opinion since. We will cite one instance only to sustain our position.

In a certain county of this state the county commissioners ordered that monies of the school fund should be applied to defraying certain county expenses. The chairman of the board of education informed the chairman of the board of county commissioners that the school fund was created by law for the education of the children and he had no authority to use it for any other purposes. It was not used by the commissioners. If these boards had been composed of the same men the school fund would have been the loser.

We do not wish you to infer from this that we believe the old board or the one now in power, did ever or do now, mismanage intentionally these funds. We spoke of this in general terms.

We see yet another decision that will work hardships upon the committees, if the burdens being heaped upon them do not run them out; that the school census must be taken by the committees without cost to the school fund. We do not charge this sin to the board of education of New Hanover county, however, for that there is no law authorizing payment for this service. We don't see any for buying stoves either, still we do buy them. We would very much like to know how they propose having it done. This is a duty that is seldom done as thoroughly as it should be, and anyone starting out to perform it, should be fully posted, efficient, wise, there will be omissions and the school districts will not have credit for their full numbers. The writer once saw the census of his district, just handed in to the taker, of the omission to enter nine children, parts of whose families were on his list, showing that he had failed to make all the inquiries necessary to get out the full and correct number of children of school age in those families. The census is important in making statistics and if not correct fails in its purpose. Now, is it reasonable to suppose that a man who is qualified to do through every hole and corner of the township, enter the abodes of every peasant, and enter the census of every household, and apply himself to this work without compensation? Do you know that some people are so suspicious when a man enters the house that it requires an hour or more to disabuse the minds of the occupants of any evil intentions? This work is attended also with other duties required of the committees and the supervisor. They have always been paid for this service, and have to still have it to do or disperse with this information.

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LAND MONEY CANNOT BUY

Trinity Corporation and Its Property on Broadway.

(From The Church Investor.)
The Rev. Dr. Morgan Dix, rector of Trinity church, said to a reporter for The Church Economist recently that many offers have been made to the Trinity corporation to purchase the old St. Paul's churchyard on Broadway, between Fulton and Vesey streets, for business purposes. Several years ago the stock exchange tried to buy it, and more recently a great railroad corporation made advances for the property. "But it will not be sold," said Mr. Dix. "At least not while the persons in control of Trinity's affairs are alive. No valuation in dollars and cents has ever been placed on this property. It is prized and guarded from sentiment of reverence and love."

This remark of the distinguished rector of Trinity, significant in view of the suggestion advanced at a recent assembly of clergymen in this city that Trinity would dispose of some of its valuable unproductive property it would be enabled to enlarge its field of usefulness, especially in the matter of helping other churches. More than sixty Protestant Episcopal churches in this country have received financial aid from Trinity corporation, and their relief has been regarded as quite the proper thing that whenever a church of that denomination runs into debt it shall turn to Trinity for help. Trinity's income, from a custom of \$100,000 a year, and a large proportion of that amount goes in annuities to other churches, and to educational institutions. It has always been the custom of Trinity to extend a helping hand to struggling churches by carrying a mortgage on the property without interest. For illustration, a small Episcopal congregation buys or builds a church worth \$50,000. The members are able perhaps to pay two-thirds of that amount down. Trinity advances the balance, and the necessary \$10,000 and taking a mortgage, on which, however, the rich corporation never expects interest. The lien is corded only in the public records, and Trinity's equity in the property in case its use for church purposes ceases.

The fact that there are so many poor churches in need of financial aid is probably responsible for the renewal of the suggestion that Trinity might greatly increase its revenue by selling the historic and valuable block occupied by St. Paul's to some commercial use. The city assessors in placing a pro forma valuation of \$1,500,000 on that particular piece of property made an estimate of \$1,500,000. It would probably bring much more than that at an open sale. Trinity, however, has a large block, opposite the head of Wall street on Broadway, is valued by the city officials at \$1,000,000. That makes nearly \$5,000,000 of unproductive property in the financial centre of the metropolis.

George's Sudden Bluff Called

"I thought I was going to sell a basket to one of my neighbors a few days ago," said the undertaker, according to The Kansas City Times. "A certain young man who has been dissipating considerably of late, and has gotten himself into debt, became desperate and threatened on several occasions to commit suicide. His widowed mother did not give him some of the money she had borrowed on their little home in Westport. Not long ago he went home to see his mother on his face, calling his mother into the parlor, said, as he pulled a revolver from his pocket:

"I will have the money or right here I will end my miserable existence."
"Wait! Wait!" screamed the mother, as she rushed from the room. A moment later she overheard the young man's face as he mumbled to himself about knowing he would get it, but he was destined to die. In a moment his mother returned, carrying a large rug. Quietly she spread it down on the carpet, and then, straightening up, said:

"Now, George, go ahead. I was afraid you would spoil my carpet with blood stains."
The boy almost sank to the floor in his astonishment and disappointment. He was sure if he made a bluff at shooting himself his mother would accede to his unjust demands and give him the little money she was saving to buy the necessities of life with, but on the day when she had come over to his house and told my wife about his threats. My wife put the idea into her head to bluff her son the next time he threatened to commit suicide. She was afraid to try, but summoning up all her nerve, she carried out instructions, and succeeded.

The boy hasn't said a word about dying since.

Charity Organization.

I have been in New York working as a minister of the Gospel for the last eight years. In that period I have seen scores of hundreds of cases to the Charity Organization Society for investigation, and the only relief which I have ever known them to give was in one case, where they gave 89 cents to a family in the direst distress. I regard this organization as a fraud on the public, sailing under false pretences, and I have long believed that its title, based on its history, should be "The Society for the Prevention of Charity." It spends \$50,000 a year for organization and nothing for charity. In fact, it has published to the world the fact that it does not dispense charity. It disburses all of its revenues in salaries of officials and in the expenses of investigating alleged cases of poverty, and if it finds one which it regards as deserving help it appeals to some church or individual to extend the aid required.

If there be any man in New York, or any family, which has ever received aid direct from the Charity Organization Society I should be glad to hear of it. The society is actively opposed to anybody and everybody who gives direct relief to a poor person. Rev. Dr. Madison C. Peters in New York Journal.

To the Fore

Move to the fore.
Men whom God hath made fit for the fray!
Not yours to shrink, as the feeble ones may.
Not yours to parley and quibble and dawdle.
Ill for the world, if ye do not God's work. Move to the fore!

Move to the fore.
Say not another is fitter than thou—Shame to the manhood that sits on thy brow!
Own thyself equal to all that man may. Cease thine evading; God needs thee to-day.

Move to the fore!
Move to the fore.
God himself waits, and must wait, till thou come.
Men are God's prophets though ages be dumb.
Hails the Christ-kingdom, with conquest so near?

Thou art the cause, then, thou run at the rear.
Move to the fore!
James Buckham in Philadelphia Sunday school Times.

Honor for a N. C. Boy.

Willis G. Peace, of N. C., won his appointment to West Point in a competitive examination in 1896. Shortly after he entered West Point he was selected on class day as the first of four model soldiers on all points to represent his class. Again in a review just held before the Secretary of War he was selected as one of the four model soldiers. Mr. Peace was also one of only three men in his class to receive no demerits during the year. Boys prepared at Horner School will honor him.

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